1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

241 178 212 satisfaction with traditional ways but also because the low level of literacy makes difficult even the presentation of new methods. The low level of literacy directly limits the media available for propagation of new ideas, and there is little consciousness of the existence of other methods in other areas. These factors restrict the intellectual horizon and reduce the tolerance for change.

241 407 [242] [254] As yet, mechanized agriculture is almost unknown--there are probably less than fifty tractors in the entire Recôncavo. Agricultural machinery is confined almost exclusively to government agricultural experiment stations and extension services or to the largest sugar fazendas--in 1952-53 the tractors of the fazendas were largely unused because of the lack of new parts or general unsuitability for the tasks at hand. A very small number of agricultural workers have had any experience with agricultural machinery. The introduction of large quantities of farm equipment would raise many problems related to skill and receptivity. However, the truck, bus, and jeep are omnipresent in the Recôncavo, and the number of competent drivers and mechanics is surprisingly large. Most of these mechanically skilled workers live in the cities and towns, but some are available everywhere, especially in the sugar area. In this area, too, many workers have had experience with such massive equipment as the ox-plow. Thus the introduction of tractors and their accessories into the sugar zone, the area most adapted to mechanization at the present moment, would find at least a small cadre of experienced workers available. [493]

241 461 In addition to skills, the mode of labor and the attitude toward work are important factors in evaluating the agricultural labor force. Agricultural work in the Recôncavo tends to be a joint enterprise--it is joint effort which makes it possible to perform many heavy or arduous tasks with little mechanical assistance. On the cane plantations

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

244 433 311 manioc and produced 38 per cent of its 393,720 tons of harvested roots. Within this sub-region manioc occupied up to 20 per cent of the total land area, i.e., 20 hectares per square kilometer (Map 23). Despite the [249] intensity of cultivation and the concentration of production, the crop is viewed by the people primarily as a means--subsistence--to an end--[242] leaf tobacco production.[9] Manioc characteristically succeeds tobacco in the field and fallow rotation system and is used to extract the maximum possible value from such nutrients as remain in the soil.[10]

244 249 A close areal and functional relationship between the two crops is characteristic also of the linear zone of manioc cultivation which follows the belt of Intermediate Hills and the inner edge of the Uplands from the Rio Paraguaçu--at Cachoeira--to Irará. Much the same relationship exists in Santo Estêvão in the extreme west of the Recôncavo, where manioc, and tobacco, cultivation is concentrated in a zone of low serras. Apparently tobacco cultivation has been fixed by the greater precipitation around these serras, and manioc is grown in association.

The major southwestern concentration of manioc is continued beyond the Recôncavo along a belt extending through Santo Antônio and into the "coffee zone."[11] The cluster of manioc around the cidade of Santo Antônio is circum-urban, but the principal functional association is with tobacco cultivation, rather than with the small urban market. [443] On the other hand, the concentration of manioc production around the city of Nazaré reflects a dependency on the local urban market and probably on the market of Salvador. Minor concentrations of cultivation in northern Itaparica and around Salvador also are related primarily to the market of the capital city.

244 311 The relative place of manioc within the agricultural system, as measured by the per cent of the total cropland which it occupies, varies widely within the Recôncavo (Map 26). The statistical extremes are

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1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

244 311 From the latitude of the head of the Bay northward, manioc appears as a dominant crop only in the município of Pojuca. In the Central Recôncavo, around the perimeter of the sugar cane area, manioc generally occupied, in 1948, less than 30 per cent of the cropland. In the north, [243] along the borders of the Recôncavo, the share of manioc in the cropland dropped to 10 per cent, and it was replaced by corn and beans as the basis of the subsistence economy.

244 311 433 The yield of manioc in the areas of heavy production was relatively low—10 to 15 tons of roots per hectare—compared to the Central Recôncavo, which produced small quantities at 30 tons per hectare (Map 27). These [134] differences in yield are related in part to the difference in soil fertility between the Cretaceous soils of the Central Recôncavo and the sandy loams of the Southwest. In addition, manioc is cultivated alone in the former zone, but follows the soil-taxing tobacco plant on the fields of the Southwest, thus further reducing the yield. The mean yield of manioc in the Recôncavo in 1948 was 14 tons per hectare, which is close to the 13 tons per hectare of Brazil and of the French Cameroons, but much higher than the 7 tons per hectare of Java and Madura.[13]

244 249 Manioc is, then, a crop characteristic of most parts of the Recôncavo and the surrounding zone, except in the sugar cane area and [242] the Tabular Uplands. The area of greatest concentration of cultivation and production is the Southwestern Recôncavo where manioc is integrated with tobacco production in a system of land rotation. In addition, as discussed above, manioc has the greatest relative importance of the crops of two zones in which the total area cultivated is small: the southwestern belt of forested lowland and the drier, scrub-forest Crystalline Uplands.

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

crop of poor tobacco without the application of manure. Commercial fertilizers are beyond the means of all but a very small minority of cultivators. Those large growers who have experimented with commercial fertilizers report unfavorable results, presumably because of excessive leaching in the porous soils.

(3) The system of seed selection is illustrative of the general crudity of cultivation. As indicated above, the seeds are taken from the old and repeatedly harvested plants of the preceding season. The only criterion for selection is survival--the seed plant continued to produce longer than the rest of the crop. This does not mean that it produced more leaf or better quality--indeed, the opposite is often the case. Occasionally better seeds are available from the federal or state government, but the cultivators take little interest.

(4) The practice of harvesting the entire stalk or shoot at one time increases the variation in quality, since there are appreciable differences in the stages of development of the leaves. Immature leaves do not cure properly, while overripe leaves will produce only inferior grades.

(5) The primitive methods of drying and fermenting further reduce the quality of the leaf. Where the leaves are dried indoors over the fire, they acquire a smoky character. Frequently the debts of the cultivator force him to sell part of his crop prematurely so that a bulk large enough for fermentation is not assembled. On the other hand, if a large bulk of leaf is accumulated for curing and fermentation, there is always the risk of scorching, since thermometers are never used to check the temperature. A common abuse, and a costly one to the cultivator, results from delay in stringing the leaf up to dry. If the freshly cut leaves are allowed to remain piled in the sun before hanging, the green color is fixed. This damage cannot be

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

128 241 (2) tobacco production; (3) manioc production; (4) the land rotation system; and (5) alternative agricultural products.

249 471 For three centuries the sugar industry was the basis of the commercial economy of the Recôncavo, and for the last century it has continued to play an important role. As a result of its long and profitable history, it has a number of advantages as a basis for agricultural development. Its capital assets are large--the best land in the region, a number of industrial plants, and a transportation network. Moreover, its [565] land is organized into large units, many of which are under the control of a single company, and all of which are under the control of a small group of the upper class. The industry has a large administrative staff, the most experienced in the region in large-scale enterprises--the organization of agricultural and industrial production, labor, transportation, and finance. It has the very great advantage of good political connections and government support. A part of the industry, [242] composed chiefly of the largest usinas, has had some experience with improved varieties of cane, and on a very limited scale with mechanization.

249 471 433 Against these advantages are a number of limiting factors. Most of the local capital of the sugar industry apparently is committed in the present plant. The sugar economy of the Recôncavo is large scale only in relation to the other agricultural enterprises of the region--the mean daily capacity of the mills can scarcely exceed 500 ton. Moreover, many of the mills are obsolescent--there is only one new usina, and only the larger mills have very much new equipment. Despite [464] the presumed administrative skill of the industry, labor has been one [178] of the continuing problems since the deterioration of the old feudalistic [466] employer-employee relationships of the late nineteenth century. However,

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

249 471 433 these individual shortcomings of the industry are less important than, and to a certain extent derived from, three basic problems of the sugar economy: land, market, and leadership.

249 [311] Most of the area of Cretaceous soil in the lowlands of the Recôncavo presently is occupied by sugar cane or by the fallow fields. Only those lands which are too wet or which are needed for settlement, mills, or transportation are not used for cultivation. Thus there seems to be little opportunity to increase the area of good sugar cane land. It would presumably be possible to reduce the fallow period by lengthening the period of ratoon harvests or to abandon the fallow period altogether. If, as seems likely, these changes would reduce the yield of cane, then it would be necessary to begin to use expensive imported fertilizers in order not to lose the advantages gained by increasing [242] the intensiveness of cultivation. The introduction of high-yielding Javanese varieties of cane has already been attempted, but because of climatic conditions, soil deficiencies, poor cultivation practices, or a combination of these factors, yields remain below East Indian levels. [134] It is theoretically possible that sugar cane cultivation could be extended to the other soils of the lowland--the Tertiary sandy soils and the crystalline soils of the peninsula and of the Intermediate Hills west of the Bay. Both of these soils, however, are relatively infertile, and the sandy soils are particularly unsuited for cane because of their poor retention of water. Sugar cane cultivation is not practical on the Uplands on account of the low precipitation—cane can be grown in only a few damp valleys of the Uplands.

175 249 439 The second great disadvantage of the sugar cane industry of the Recôncavo is in its market relationship. The history of the sugar cane economy of the region may be summarized as follows. At the end of the sixteenth century the forty engenhos of the Recôncavo exported 1,800 tons

249 the crop region would decline and that manure, essential to the production of tobacco, would become even more expensive than at present. Any increase in the intensity of tobacco production would probably decrease the production of manioc, so that both the sub-region and the Recôncavo would have an even greater food deficit than at present.

241 The system of land rotation is clearly one of the basic problems of the Recôncavo. As the population of the region grows, the problem of the system of cultivation will almost certainly become progressively more acute. One solution which is being proposed by the rural missions of the Ministry of Education is the use of composting as a [178] substitute for manure. As yet the results of the mission program is not clear, but it is obvious that the resistance and the apathy toward new agricultural ideas in the region are very great. As far as could be ascertained, mixed agriculture has not been suggested as a solution to the problem. Indeed, in view of the lack of additional land for the production of forage crops or of grasses, it is difficult to see how such a proposal could be implemented.

• 242 It is apparent even to the casual observer that there are some alternative crops which might be produced in the Recôncavo. From time to time the agricultural experiment stations and a few enterprising [243] land owners point the way. One example is the production of corn as a commercial crop in the northern part of the município of Muritiba. At [312] the price of corn prevailing in 1953, it was believed possible to produce the crop profitably using irrigation water pumped from the Rio Paraguaçu, and a single landowner was making the attempt. Obviously there are no large areas in the narrow valley which can be irrigated, nor is the water supply great. It is, however, suggestive that it is possible to produce a staple food crop at as great a profit as tobacco. In the

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

242 [245] In the sugar cane zone there has been one small scale experiment with white cacao, which can be sold at a higher price than the ordinary variety. It is believed that this crop would do well on the soils now under sugar cane and perhaps on some of the other soils of the lowlands. Since cacao in the Recôncavo presumably would be free of the diseases which cause so much difficulty in the main area of cultivation along the southern coast of the state, it might be possible to stabilize Bahia's cacao production and at the same time to improve agricultural conditions in the Recôncavo. [243] Another alternative use for the Cretaceous soils of the sugar cane region might be for the cultivation of rice, which is presently grown on a small scale in Santo Amaro. In view of the perennial shortages and high cost of food in both the Recôncavo and in Brazil, such a generally acceptable food should find a ready market. On the other hand, the development of cacao or rice cultivation in this area would mean the abandonment of the heavy investment in sugar mills and plantations.

241 178 Although the evaluation of specific suggestions is the province of the agricultural specialist, one fact is clearly shown in the results of the present research--any proposal for the future development of the Recôncavo will have to conquer the inherent traditional orientation of agriculture in the region.

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trative work; he comes into office with a mayor and frequently remains through the terms of several other mayors. He therefore knows the duties well and can aid the mayor considerably. In addition, the secretary has a small store in town, capitalized at Cr$10.000,00, where drinks (rum and soft drinks), dried meat (charque), cigars, cigarettes, grass mats, condensed milk, wooden sandals, and a few other small items are sold. [443] [471]

The top municipal office is that of the mayor, which in Brazil is a county-wide office. The mayor is not on the above list as an employee, because he occupies another place in the census from which these data were taken. In Vila Recôncavo the mayor has come traditionally from the top social level, the rural landowning group. The office is elective, with a four-year term, except in the 1930's and 1940's, when the mayor was chosen by the appointed governor of the state (interventor). In Vila Recôncavo, as a general rule, the mayor has little or no interest in the town or, except in a few cases, in the office, which is considered a more-or-less onerous duty. He traditionally does not accept his salary. At the time of the last election there was consternation on the part of the planters, for no one wanted the office but clearly someone had to take it. When the choice was made, the candidate--one of the usina directors--was elected, for he had no opponent. The majority of the duties are left in the hands of the secretary, the mayor doing only a minimum of supervision and contributing little that is constructive. Generally any important matters are discussed at the home of the mayor, and his orders are conveyed to the secretary by messenger or telephone.

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The last mayor, Dr. Aliança, was an exception to the rule. He was interventor in 1947 and was elected mayor in 1948, serving until the general elections in the fall of 1950. He is a civil engineer and the owner of two large plantations, maintaining in perfect condition the old master's house of the former plantation in which he lives, as well as a large house in Salvador. While the roots of his family are in the Recôncavo, he himself came from the north and married into a plantation family of Vila Recôncavo. Although his family tradition has been that of sugar cane, he has not hesitated to break many of the traditional patterns of the area. One of his two plantations has been given over to experiments with other crops, such as bananas, rice, and manioc, on a relatively large scale, and also some production of milk and butter. A few

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Town Life]

159 632 463 [242] years ago, after determining that these crops were not sufficiently rewarding, he made a large-scale planting of white cacao. It is still too early to speak of the outcome of this venture, for the trees have not yet started to give their first fruit, but this instance illustrates his usual energetic spirit.

159 632 463 653 Dr. Aliança took the office of mayor seriously and gave a great deal of energy to it. His accomplishments were many in the space of a few years: the paving of most of the town's streets, the installation of electric lights on the streets, the formation of a company to sell electricity to those who wanted it, the installation of telephone communications with the capital, and the construction of a new, modern primary school building. As a result of his personal energy and direction these works were completed, or at least nearly so, when he left the office. (According to law, the mayor cannot be re-elected). However, with the exception of building a bridge, nothing was done in the rural areas of the county. Traditionally any public works in the county are done in the county seat.

441 463 443 [471] Many of the merchants in Group 1 are small operators. The capitalization of the stores in Vila Recôncavo runs from Cr$100.000,00 to as low as Cr$5.00,00. However, no matter how small the store, it provides a living for someone, or as they say in Vila Recôncavo, "Sempre da!" To the ordinary town citizen it is difficult to get enough capital together to open a store, but once opened it rarely closes for lack of business. Of the twelve stores in town, eight are owned and operated by men, and the other four belong to women. The best store in town and the poorest one both belong to women. The "best" store, Dona Carmen's, is the oldest, located on the main street leading from the boat dock. At present it is owned by Dona Carmen, who inherited it from her brother. It combines a general store and a bakery, and its prices are often slightly higher than those in other stores. It serves most of the people living in the older section of town. In addition to having the largest stock of ordinary foods, the store also carries finer packaged products such as wines, jellies, and preserves.

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444 256 Bread is baked in the afternoon and delivered to the doors of the customers' houses, still warm and with the delicious odor always associated with bread fresh from the oven. The bakery's customers for the most part have standing orders, receiving bread or rolls each day in time for supper. What is left over is hawked through the streets by the delivery boy,

change. New faces and basically different relationships prevail at Usina São Pedro. 178 249* [466]

Another change, but this time in tune with the past, was an increase of capital, applied to the improvement of the factory. The capacity of the mill has been greatly enlarged. However, the agricultural part of the combination continues as it did before, with no innovations. The result is that the factory is able to mill and produce sugar much more quickly than it can be supplied with sugar cane. The hierarchical aspect of the factory as earlier diagrammed remains the same, and each plantation is still run as a separate unit. 178 249* 433 [471] [466]

In contrast, the private plantation in the community of Vila Recôncavo has undergone relatively little change in these five years. Always the most conservative element in the Recôncavo, the private plantation continues to retain its distinguishing feature: the personal, face-to-face, paternalistic owner-worker relations. The hierarchical pattern remains the same. Operations are still basically hand- and animal-powered, but private planters are slowly introducing mechanization in certain aspects of the process, especially that of transportation; trucks and tractor-drawn wagons carry cane from the fields to the factory. Tractors and mechanical plows are used to an increasingly large extent in the preparation of the soil, and mechanical cultivators are already in use on some plantations. However, the bulk of the work is still done by hand, and traction is supplied by oxen and mules. As yet no mechanical loaders, ditch-diggers, or planters have appeared, and little use is made of fertilization or herbicides. Few scientific agricultural practices are in use. The planter is still first and foremost a "practical" man. 178 249* [466] 461 [492] [493] [407] [492] [407] [242]

Relations between the factory and the private plantations have also undergone considerable change, in both business and social aspects. The new managers of the factory have succeeded in almost completely alienating the private planters who supply them with sugar cane. Not only the members of the extended Conde family, but also other cane suppliers resented the highhanded, brusque methods of the new managers. Wishing to break completely with the past, the new managers instituted several new policies in relations with the cane suppliers. Formerly the private suppliers bought sugar by the sack, bought their supplies at the company store, and had their machines repaired at the company workshops, paying for such services at the end of the harvest season. The sup- 178 249* 571 [443] [452] [407]

2: Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
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For the first time in the history of Vila Recôncavo the workers' discontent has taken the form of a strike accompanied by violence. The strike, although a general one throughout the sugar industry, was the first one in which workers of Vila Recôncavo participated. It was specifically directed against the agricultural part of the factory combination; however, it affected some private plantations as well, and was joined by workers of private plantations. The strike was put down immediately and effectively by the state police. On investigation the police found considerable Communist literature and propaganda in the quarters of the labor union in Centro which had organized the strike. The labor union itself was illegal, since it was not registered with the proper authorities, and its leaders were well-known Communist agitators. What is important for our study is the appearance in the community of Vila Recôncavo of written and verbal Communist propaganda and the willingness of the local agricultural workers to participate in a general strike. This is a tremendous change for such a conservative area, where loyalty and paternalism have always been so strong.

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Thus the sugar industry of Vila Recôncavo has entered a phase of many new difficulties: ties between factory and private planters are strained, and labor relations are becoming a problem for the private, as well as the corporate, planters. Inflation and the "dollar situation," which affect planters directly since all machinery must be imported, are also working toward the build-up of a new "crisis," continuing the pattern described in Chapter 3.

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However, a new element is entering the community of Vila Recôncavo in the form of a new crop, cacao. One of the planters began experimenting with cacao during the author's first period of research in Vila Reconcavo. However, at least five years must pass before it can be known if the cacao tree will give satisfactory fruit. At the end of 1955 the Institute of Cacao of Bahia presented the experiment to the public as a success and is now systematically stimulating interest in cacao as a possible and lucrative substitute for sugar cane.

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Cacao is Bahia's major export crop and in general means money to a Bahian. Still more attractive is the fact that the cacao introduced to the Recôncavo is a genetic mutation, giving a white-seeded fruit which brings a much higher price on the world market than does the ordinary fruit. The financial attraction of cacao, plus the disagreeable and financially weak

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position of the sugar industry in Vila Recôncavo, is creating considerable interest on the part of the community's planters. Just as sugar cane is limited by soil and climatic conditions, so also is the cacao. There is little fear, therefore, of competition from many other areas. In addition, cacao is exportable, while the sugar of the area is for internal consumption only.

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In spite of the attraction of this new crop, there are a number of problems which must be dealt with. First, the details of a change from sugar cane to cacao must be worked out, especially as regards space and financing. The planter must juggle his sugar plantings, pastures, and rotation lands so that he can slowly take out land for preparation for cacao. If he wants to finance the changeover himself, he cannot lessen his sugar production; in fact, he needs more money than before. Banks in general lend on the forthcoming crop; if the crop is reduced, so is the amount which can be borrowed. However, to overcome this, the Institute of Cacao of Bahia is preparing a financing program on a long-term basis. Sugar cane is a perennial, planted one year, bearing for the next three or four years, then ploughed under and replanted. Cacao, on the other hand, is a permanent tree crop which gives its first fruit in five years, reaches maturity in fifteen or twenty years, and then continues to produce annually for sixty to one hundred years. Thus sugar cane is financed on a one-year basis, while initial plantings of cacao must be financed on a long-term basis of ten to fifteen years. The change from a perennial crop to a permanent crop also requires a totally different mental set on the part of the planter.

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Cacao is a "forest crop," which means that it requires shading. Under primitive conditions it is planted in dense tropical forest. In Vila Recôncavo, however, the former tropical forest has been entirely cleared away during the last four hundred years, since sugar cane tolerates no shade. Therefore, before the cacao can be planted, shade must be provided. This is done by planting banana trees and, at fixed intervals, single seedlings of a precocious, long-living, high-growing shade tree. To pay for the work involved it is common to plant manioc between the banana trees. The manioc is gathered the following year, and shortly thereafter the young cacao trees can be planted. The banana trees offer sufficient shade for the young plants. For a period of five or six years the planter

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242 can collect bananas, which should pay for the operating costs
[434] while waiting for the cacao to mature. At the end of a five- or six-year period, the shade tree is usually large enough to provide sufficient shade, and the banana trees are gradually removed. At the same time the cacao begins to give its fruit, and one can then consider himself a cacauicultor.

178 Several planters in Vila Recôncavo are at the banana-manioc
245 planting stage, and have met with their first serious labor
461 problem. No one wants to work in banana and manioc fields,
464 as the work is arduous and slow. Machines are not available
[407] for the mechanical cultivation of manioc, so the work must be done by hand. The work is slowly being accomplished, but at costs which will make the manioc a considerable liability.

178 Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties, there is con-
245 siderable interest in cacao in Vila Recôncavo, and cacao must
433 be considered as an element of change in the community which
*[247] will have far-reaching effects. The area of sugar production will be considerably reduced, requiring adjustments on the part of the factories, which represent large financial investments. Furthermore, cacao is a fairly simple product to process--its conversion into chocolate is usually done after export --and so it is quite likely that each plantation will return to the older aspect of the plantation, both growing and processing
[571] the crop, and become once again a highly self-sufficient unit. This would of course bring about a new alignment of socio-economic relations and would undoubtedly alter the community structure.

178 A third principal cause of change in Vila Recôncavo is the
315 growth of a new and potent industry within the community and
433 throughout the county. This new industry is the nascent Brazilian petroleum industry. Exploratory work was done in Vila Recôncavo in 1950 and 1951 under the guidance of the Conselho Nacional de Petroleo. Since that date a nationalised company, Petrobrás, has been formed to exploit the oil fields which lie under the topsoil of the county of Vila Recôncavo. Petrobrás has brought in several hundred oil wells and has built roads, pipelines, storage tanks, and machine shops. Just outside the limits of the community, but within the county, it has built
[425] its oil refinery and has created a small new, modern city to house the technical workers of the refinery and the field. On land expropriated from the Usina São Pedro it has also con-

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In the very large *usinas*, the mill hands and even the field hands are modern industrial workers. They are employees of a large industrial corporation and are protected at least theoretically by the labour laws of the nation. The highly personalized relationship between the plantation workers and the owner-administrator of his own plantation, which persisted from the slave era, has been replaced on the larger *usinas* by the impersonal employee-employer relationship of the modern industrial age. Today, modern plantations and small towns have electricity; there is modern housing for workmen; the State and even the sugar companies provide medical aid; there are primary schools both in the small towns and on many plantations; recreation facilities are found in the towns and provided by the *usinas*; and the sugar-cane experimental station situated in the area constantly urges fertilization of the land and modern techniques and methods of sugar-cane production. But the older and more traditional patterns exist side by side with the new, and each of them influences the relations among the racial groups of the zone.

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III. Vila Recôncavo is a small town on the Bay of All Saints. The rural area around it, which lies within the social and economic orbit of the town and which is the unit under consideration, comprises some 80 square kilometres, or slightly less than half the entire area of the county of which the town of Vila Recôncavo is the county seat.[1]

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It this area there are 14 plantations, three of which nowadays plant very little sugar cane. Parts of the town itself are built on the land of one of these plantations, and the rest of the town area is owned in small lots by private individuals or by the Church. Although Vila Recôncavo is the county seat, local government is the only important function which it fulfils for the surrounding area. It is not used as a shipping point, either for receiving supplies from the outside or for sending sugar to the outside. *Braços do mar*, or inlets of the bay, go to many of the plantations and are deep enough for the *saveiros* (shallow draft sailboats) used on the bay for transport. Many of the plantations have direct connexion with Salvador. Commerce in Vila Recôncavo is almost entirely limited to supplying the 1,462 inhabitants of the town and of some small islands and of one community near by which is not devoted to sugar production. It is not the major supply source even for these groups which live near enough to another and far larger commercial centre where they prefer to do their marketing. The *prefeito* or mayor of the county is rarely a resident of the town itself. Rather he is usually a planter of the surrounding area. He goes into town to do municipal business,

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[1] Both the town and the county bear the name of Vila Recôncavo.